



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY  
COMMANDER NAVY REGION SOUTHWEST  
937 NO. HARBOR DR.  
SAN DIEGO, CA 92132-0058

IN REPLY REFER TO:

COMNAVREGSWINST 6421.1A

CDU

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COMNAVREGSW INSTRUCTION 6421.1A

Subj: HYPERBARIC TREATMENT OF DIVING CASUALTIES AND NON-DIVING ILLNESSES IN THE SOUTHWEST REGION

Ref: (a) U.S. Navy Diving Manual, NAVSEA SS521-AG-PRO-010  
(b) BUMEDINST 6320.38 (Series)  
(c) OPNAVINST 3150.28 (Series)  
(d) OPNAVINST 5102.1 (Series)  
(e) NAVCOMPT Manual, Vol 3

1. Purpose. To establish policy, procedures, responsibilities, and requirements regarding the hyperbaric treatment of diving casualties and humanitarian treatments by Navy activities, installations, and organizations within Commander, Navy Region Southwest's (CNRSW) area of responsibility. This directive is not applicable to shipboard procedures for the care of active duty diving casualties occurring during diving operations.

2. Cancellation. COMNAVREGSWINST 6421.1

3. Background

a. Regionalization of Navy activities in the Southwest has created the requirement for coordination within NRSW for the implementation of Southwest Regional Bends Watch.

b. Reference (a) contains treatment tables and technical details of recompression and requires that Commanding Officers of units conducting official diving operations assure the availability of their own recompression facilities, or by direct liaison, the facilities of other commands within the geographic area. Reference (b) provides policy for clinical use of recompression chambers for non-diving illnesses. Reference (c) promulgates requirements for preparation of dive log (OPNAV Form 3150/17) accident/injury data for all personnel who undergo hyperbaric exposure. Reference (d) provides specific guidance for reporting diving mishaps. Reference (e) provides the authority for non-medical activities to charge for hyperbaric treatment.

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4. Scope. This instruction applies to all U.S. Navy activities, installations, and organizations that require or may require the clinical or non-clinical use of Hyperbaric facilities in California, Arizona and Nevada. This instruction also applies to non-Navy organizations where the Navy is proposing to allow such organizations to conduct activities that will use naval facilities, installations or assets within California, Arizona and Nevada.

5. Discussion

a. Commands maintaining personnel adequately trained in chamber operations and the medical treatment of barotraumas and those non-diving illnesses for which hyperbaric treatment are indicated and listed in paragraph 5.b.

b. Pursuant to its operational missions, the Navy maintains and operates several hyperbaric chambers in the San Diego area. Additionally, several other San Diego regional commands have personnel trained in chamber operations and the treatment of diving casualties. The following San Diego commands have been identified as having hyperbaric chambers, trained personnel or both:

(1) Consolidate Diving Unit, Naval Base San Diego (CDU).

(2) Explosive Ordnance Disposal Team Unit ONE, Naval Base Point Loma (EODTEU ONE).

(3) Commander, Explosive Ordnance Disposal Group ONE (COMEODGRUONE).

(4) Naval Special Warfare Group ONE, Naval Base Coronado (NAVSPECWARGRU ONE).

(5) Naval Special Warfare Center, Naval Base Coronado (NAVSPECWARCEN).

(6) Explosive Ordnance Disposal Unit Three, Naval Base Coronado (EODMU THREE).

(7) Deep Submergence Unit, Naval Base Coronado (DSU).

(8) Naval School of Health Sciences.

(9) Space and Naval Warfare (SPAWAR).

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(10) Mobile Diving and Salvage Unit ONE DET ONE, Naval Base San Diego (MDSU ONE DET ONE).

(11) Commander Submarine Squadron ELEVEN, Naval Base Point Lorna (COMSUBRON ELEVEN).

(12) Commander Submarine Squadron FIVE, Naval Base Point Loma (COMSUBDEVRON FIVE).

c. Military hyperbaric chamber facilities may not always be available due to operational commitments. Therefore civilian entities, whether individuals or organizations, should always contact a civilian hyperbaric facility first. There are three civilian hyperbaric facilities located in the southern California area:

(1) The UCSD Medical Center Chamber may be reached by calling 619-543-5222, (0730 - 1700). After hours call the emergency line at (619) 543-6400. They in turn will contact UCSD or the Coast Guard and arrange transportation if requested.

(2) Santa Catalina Chamber may be reached by contacting the University of Southern California Medical Alert Center at (323) 887-5310. They in turn will contact the chamber doctor and arrange transportation if requested. The 24-hour direct emergency number for the recompression chamber is (310) 510-1053. The business number is (310) 510-4020.

(3) The Grossmont Hospital/Hyperbarics Center may be reached by calling (619) 644-4160. The office phone number is (619) 644-4165 and the hospital emergency phone is (619) 465-0711 (hours of operation are 0700-1530).

6. Policy. Diving accidents requiring hyperbaric treatment in the San Diego area, which occur in the course of normal Navy/DOD operational commitments, will be in accordance with each command's established pre-dive mishap plan, reference (a). Recreational diving accidents, altitude decompression, sickness and hyperbaric medical treatments for DOD personnel, their dependents and for other civilians on an emergency basis will be affected through the Southwest Region Bends Watch promulgated in this instruction.

7. Action. CDU shall:

a. Act as the coordinating authority for recompression chambers within the region and maintain the current status of

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chambers and personnel qualifications required to provide an adequate primary and back-up Southwest Region Bends Watch.

b. Designate in writing the Senior Undersea Medical Officer (UMO) for the Southwest Region.

c. Assign, maintain, and distribute via message information relating to the Southwest Region Bends Chamber Watch bill for Area Chambers, Diving Medical Officers, Master Divers and Diving Medical Technicians.

d. Coordinate Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) between units maintaining chambers as to appropriate personnel cross-training requirements/qualifications.

e. Coordinate and distribute the monthly personnel roster.

f. Provide a 24-hour watch for implementing a recall system for Diving Medical Officers, Master Divers and Diving Medical Technicians.

#### 8. Responsibilities

a. San Diego Regional commands shall provide recall for recompression chamber treatment teams.

b. The Southwest Region Senior Undersea Medical Officer (UMO) shall coordinate Undersea Medical Officer (UMO) support for the Southwest Region Bends Watch and provide monthly UMO watch bill to CDU no later than the 12th of each month prior to the forthcoming month.

c. Duty UMOs will:

(1) Report in person to CDU on the day assuming duty, preferably on Mondays between 0900 and 1100 hours. Monday mornings will be used to perform diving relate Medical issues including dive physicals, dive candidate pressure tests, and routine regional diver sick call. If the duty UMO is unable to report to the command, they shall phone the CDU Diving Duty Officer (DDO) and obtain current chamber status, confirm that they are the duty UMO and ensure the CDU has their current phone and pager numbers.

(2) Ensure completion of medical records in treatment cases and file as required.

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(3) Advise the coordinating authority on hyperbaric medicine matters, including non-dive illness treatment, in coordination with Naval Regional Medical Center, San Diego.

c. Commanding Officers of Units with chambers and/or qualified chamber personnel shall:

(1) Maintain chamber and personnel readiness sufficient for participation in the Southwest Region Bends Watch program, and provide those assets as required.

(2) Advise CDU of changes in status of both chamber and personnel.

(3) Conduct appropriate on-going training for each duty Bends Watch team assigned.

(4) Seek appropriate reimbursements for hyperbaric treatment as provided by enclosure (2) of reference (e).

d. Commander, Naval Regional Medical Center, San Diego shall:

(1) Provide specialty assistance for the treatment of diving casualties and non-diving illnesses as necessary.

(2) Provide laboratory and ambulance support as required.

9. Persons requiring hyperbaric treatment should not contact individual Navy recompression chamber facilities directly as chamber operators and diving medical personnel are not available for immediate recall to each individual facility. Arrival at a recompression chamber without prior notification may result in a delay in treatment.



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